

Destination Images of the Ruined Tourism Areas in Typhoon Morakot

SU Wen-Yu
(Chinese Culture University)

Introduction

Tourism destinations are vulnerable to natural or non-natural disasters. Since the trend of globalization, visitors quickly moved to other destinations, resulting in the affected local tourism industry. The happen of disasters not only affects domestic tourists, but also the international tourism market suffered. In this research, how the tourism industry responses the impact of disasters, and how to rebuild the destination were investigated.

Taiwan is located in the most active circum-Pacific seismic belt; the faults are island-wide. In addition to the earthquake and typhoon, the invasion of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), avian influenza, the tourism industry had been significant impacted. As the non-natural disasters of terrorism rise in the late 80's, the worldwide famous tourist destinations spate of major criminals, tourism and security issues are becoming increasingly important. However, until the September 11 terrorist attacked 2001 in New York, and 2002 in Bali, the most serious bombing in the history, the death toll of over two hundred, academia started to encounter this issue. Even until nowadays, Bali continues to be intimidated of terrorist attack, Typhoon Morakot damaged southern Taiwan, and Japan Tohoku earthquake occurred. Public are finding culture and tourism is very important for reconstructing tourist destination.

In recent years, various tourist destinations are actively looking for its local cultural characteristics. It has been pointed out by former researches, the main reason people do tourism is seeking culture. As the increasing of tourism development, new destinations have joined the tourism market. The destination must highlight its own local culture, and it can be stand out from the numerous tourist destinations. The brand concept applied to destination in this research, and measure the destination image and destination brand.

Literature Review

2.1 Destination image

The concept of "image" originally developed by Boulding in 1956, explore the role of human in economic activities and other areas. In tourism, destination image refers to tourist's perceptions or impressions of a region, also an important indicator to express attitudes and perception of tourists on the local tourism. In 1975, Hunt discussed the role played by the destination image in tourism development. The individual destination image assemble process is very complex. Due to the received messages and personal characteristics of everybody, also by continuous

access to information for image modification, various types of image are constructed (Crompton, 1979; Kotler, Haider & Rein, 1993). Since the concept was put forward after the destination image, tourist destination image has become a hot research topic in the field of tourism researches (Pike, 2002).

Beerli and Martin (2004) argue that the individual thinking of destination image is from various media or information sources to form a single continuous cumulative impression. Gartner (1993) classifies image as the process of establishing the concept of media. In addition to information obtained by the formation of destination image, intrapersonal factors such as needs, motivations, prior knowledge, preferences, or other personal characteristics also affect the image formation (Beerli & Martin, 2004). Therefore, each individual will have their own image perception (Beerli & Martin, 2004). To marketing staff, it is difficult to change the original information, but can be easily through promotion and publicity affect tourists' evoked induced information (Rittichainuwat, Brown & Qu, 2001). According Echtner and Ritchie's research (1993) that the conceptual framework of destination image including three continuous dimensions: properties – overall, function – psychological, general – unique. Hsu, Wolfe and Kang (2004) point out that the tourists destination image perception is an important factor decided whether the destination to be popular or not. If there is a clearer understanding of the destination image attributes, it could provide important information on marketing strategy.

Destination image also is a personal belief on destinations, ideas and memories aggregate (Crompton, 1979). Moutinho (1987) suggest that destination image is the tourists' attitude to the site; instead of knowledge, attitude is based on the formation of the source of the feeling. Kotler (1994) define the destination image on the site, personal beliefs, thoughts, feelings, experiences and images as the final result. Bigné, Sanchez and Sanchez (2001) mention that destination image is sketches of recreation places generated by tourists.

Millman and Pizam (1995) define the destination image as the engagement of the sum of relevant experience attributes. Coshall (2000) considers the destination image as personal impression held for destination features. It can be seen destination image is generated by personal feelings to overall perception arising to the site.

2.2 Destination brand

American Marketing Association (AMA) in 1960 defined the brand as a name, a sign, a term, a symbol, a design or a combination of those; in order to confirm one or a group of products or services, as not been confused with other competitors. Kotler and Gertner (2002) display that brand not only distinguish the performance of products and value commitment, but also contains stimulate consumers purchasing motives and behaviors. Keller (2003) indicates the manufacturers' invented a new name; a new trademark symbol for new products that is has created a brand. Brand is not only the appearance of the product or form characterization, gradually extended to consumers' products experience and location (Aaker, 1992).

Unlike previous studies of many other products and services covered by the brand issues, the concept of destination brand is an innovative research topic (Cai, 2002; Konecnik & Gartner, 2007). Application in destination brand is a relatively new phenomenon (Murphy, Moscardo & Benckendorff, 2007). Destination branding concept derived from traditional brand marketing skills (Blain, Levy & Ritchie, 2005). In terms of tourism activity, destination branding provides

the product of destination attraction. It is not only the key to create a destination brand, but also the basis to create a unique destination and customers' satisfaction.

The research of destination brand is proposed by Dosen, Vransevic and Prebezac the brand of the Republic of Croatia was surveyed in 1998. Pritchard and Morgan (1998) also suggest a strategy case study of Wales England as a destination brand. Until Pritchard and Morgan (2001) and Pride (2002) suggest the concept of destination branding, destination brand became widespread attention. The first book themed destination brand also published in 2002 (Papadopolous & Heslop, 2002). Kavaratzis (2005) consider that the destination brand development contains successfully branding products and its popularity, the advent of enterprise organization brand, and must rely on physical products to marketing.

Kotler (2002) suggest that the concept of the development of national brand transplanted to the destination is actually applicable. He suggested there is the concept or central idea of "National umbrella brand", further develop other regional, corporate, product brand. For instances, based on local industries, people features, natural scenery, historical events, innovation, and entertainment, further develop the story of a destination. Frost (2005) points out that a lot of local people trying to construct a nation or a region as brands. Freire (2005) also mentions the branding theory has been derived to other fields. Therefore, in addition to the product or service can be developed into a brand, destination also can be developed by its unique or highly recognizable brand by management system.

Murphy et al. (2007) propose destination brand can be used by marketers as a tool to attract tourists, exceed other similar destinations, and gain competitive advantages. Destination brand includes constructing the brand, assisting the unique theme of marketing management, and characterizing the promotion. Local tourism destination must find its own characteristics that are the attractiveness, to become popular and self-marketing in a highly competitive environment (Handerson, 2000).

The stronger local characteristics are the higher possibility tourists will select as a tourist destination (Chen & Tsai, 2007). Radisic, Branka and Mihelic (2006) advocate a destination brand that is successful in the tourist market must rely on their own image, brand and product identification labels.

Kotler, Bowen and Maken (2003) suggest it is suitable to use brand in the field of tourism, and the brand allow consumers to easily identify, cognitive price, and easy to maintain quality and standard. Branding tourism is similar with other marketing that branded products and services; the main difference is the destination brand emphasizes uniqueness and the development of emotional connection of tourists (Cai, 2002). Rainisto (2003) integrate and proposed the definition of destination brand, destination brand must like the original brand have satisfactory functional, symbol and emotional needs; and the need to design the unique demands of destination branding, established relationship between tourist and the destination, and favorable to the value of destination image.

Hankinson (2005) position the brand into four, such as: communicators, relationships, value enhancers and perceptual entities. He emphasized a destination brand must be built on the concept of relationships. Anholt (2004) points out that in understanding the definition of destination branding should have thoroughly clear concept of branding. Pike (2009) fusion the proposed arrangement and merger definition suggested by Blain et al. (2005) and Cai (2002).

In this research, the definition of destination brand for Cai (2002) is introduced, that is, the destination brand is to create a brand name, symbol, sign, in order to make people aware of the location, and distinguish the different from other destinations.

Research Methodology

3.1 Research framework

Based on relevant literatures in this study, research framework establishes of destination image, and destination branding. Relationships between destination image and destination branding are discussed.

3.2 Sampling and data collection

This research is based on a serious Typhoon Morakot smashed villages and historic areas, selected sampling locations near the historic areas. And, the tourists visiting the historic areas for cultural tourism are sampling. Since the subjects of this research were general tourists, convenience sampling is used. The questionnaires distribute and collect on sites. 100 valid questionnaires were collected as pre-test questionnaires. Modify the pre-test questionnaires, formal questionnaires distributed. Valid questionnaires are expected to retrieve more than 300 copies.

3.3 Data analysis methods

Statistical software package of SPSS (Statistical package for the social science) is used as the data analysis tools to retrieve questionnaires. Item analysis, reliability analysis, descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, regression analysis are used.

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